



Los Angeles County  
*Mental Health Wellness Magazine*

# Minds & Matters

WINTER 2012

## CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON CAROLINE SEVERANCE MANOR



The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) joined Mercy Housing California, California Community Foundation Land Trust and First Unitarian Church of Los Angeles for the groundbreaking of the Caroline Severance Manor. The event took place on Wednesday, November 16, 2011, near the First Unitarian Church on West 8th Street in L.A.

Officials turned the dirt with shovels in hand. The groundbreaking marks the start of construction on the supportive housing, mixed-use community. When completed, the supportive housing project will be made up of 85 total units, including 48 units funded by the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). Of the MHSA-funded units, 30 of them will target homeless adults with a psychiatric disorder. The other 18 units will provide housing for families who either have an adult or child who is receiving mental health services.

"This project is one of the best examples of partnerships, of getting things done in Los Angeles County. It's innovative and it helps families in ways we never did before," said Marvin Southard, D.S.W., LACDMH Director. "This is innovative because we can help families where children are identified and receiving services." Dr. Southard also noted the partnership was unique because it bridges with faith-based communities. "This shows we all do partnership well."

Mercy Housing California is working with the First Unitarian Church and the Ketchum YMCA of Downtown Los Angeles to plan a community that will include parking for the church and an on-site licensed childcare center for up to 80 kids. The development is also a partnership with LACDMH and Children and Family Services. Caroline Severance Manor is expected to be completed by spring 2013.

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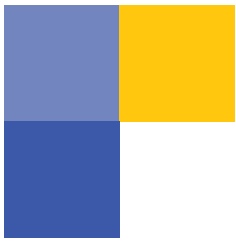
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# Minds & Matters

From Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W., Director  
Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health



## ***Heroes and Villains***

Anyone who has heard my talk at the New Employee Orientation knows that I usually spend time talking about how fortunate we are to be working at a place like LACDMH where there is a very clear connection between the work that all of us – clinicians, administrators, accountants, clerical and all the rest — do and people having a better life. I say that a hero is someone who can pour their life's energy into a task which has an effect on a cause greater than one's own personal self-interest. At LACDMH, we all can be heroes.

On the last day of November, I visited the Roybal Center's Full-Service Partnership "Mamas y Bebés" program for young mothers and their children with Senator Darrell Steinberg, and I had the chance to see heroes in action. Senator Steinberg and I were deeply moved by the skill, competence and dedication of the staff at all levels who we had the chance to talk with, the deep bond that was clearly evident between the mothers and Roybal staff, and the brave resilience of the young women. We felt that both the LACDMH staff and the clients were truly heroic. The Roybal program is just one example of the many heroic things that I hear of every single day about your work and how it has made the lives of clients and their families better.

So who are the villains? I am not sure that there are any villains in this story in any conventional sense. I think that the negative forces that we all face in the important work that we are doing are the sorts of obstacles that confront anyone who is doing critical tasks. We get tired, we forget to take proper care of ourselves, then when we are tired, overworked and have not taken care of ourselves, the temptations to impatience and cynicism can arise. So, this is my message to you heroes working for LACDMH: Even superheroes need to take care of themselves. Please spend the time to reconnect with people you love and the values that have inspired you to do this work. Take good care of yourselves. Los Angeles needs you!

*Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.*

**hope** wellness  
**recovery**





# Employee Recognition

## Retired

### September 2011

Conchita Dela Torre,  
26 yrs  
Herminio S.  
Academia, 12 yrs  
Mimi S. Hanzel,  
14 yrs  
Umoren Eduok,  
12 yrs

### October 2011

Cora D. Ferguson,  
24 yrs  
Joseph E. Mills,  
10 yrs  
Sossy Semerdjian,  
21 yrs  
Debra Levy, 13 yrs  
Lillie Tatum, 30 yrs

### November 2011

Waymon Baker,  
21 yrs  
Rose Fischkes,  
11 yrs  
Susan Lambert,  
18 yrs

## LACDMH TAKES HOME 2011 QUALITY & PRODUCTIVITY AWARDS

On Wednesday, October 19th, the 25th annual Los Angeles County Quality and Productivity Commission awards luncheon took place at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in downtown LA. The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) was among the award winners again this year.

The luncheon was attended by hundreds of county dignitaries and employees, and honored 74 of the county's various departments and programs.

County departments reported \$395 million in annual benefits, including \$251 million in cost avoidance, \$139 million in cost savings and nearly \$5 million in revenue. At the luncheon, Chief Executive Officer William T Fujioka praised all county employees. "We are public servants. What I like is that we're not only managers here but also folks at the line. We are having a moment of recognition. Together, we have one title... public servant in public service."

The competition was strong with hundreds of entries from all county departments, each vying for various awards and recognitions. LACDMH won three awards: Top Ten Award for the Juvenile Hall Discharge Process, a special merit plaque for La Placita Homeless Outreach Project, and a plaque for LACDMH's Online Provider Directory.

"This is an extraordinary opportunity to recognize the work of our outstanding LACDMH employees. It also shows everyone the programs we all do as employees to help achieve Hope, Wellness and Recovery for our clients," stated LACDMH Director, Marvin Southard, D.S.W.

#### The Top Ten Award:

Juvenile Hall Discharge Process (Probation with Health Services and Mental Health)  
Lead Manager for Mental Health – Karen Streich, Ph.D., District Chief  
Deputy Director – Sandra Thomas, L.C.S.W.

#### Special Merit Plaque Winners:

La Placita Homeless Outreach Project  
(Community and Senior Services with DPSS and Mental Health)  
Lead Manager for Mental Health – Lawrence Hurst, L.C.S.W., District Chief  
Deputy Director – Tony Beliz, Ph.D.

#### Traditional Plaque Winners:

Mental Health Services – Online Provider Directory  
Lead Manager – Vandana Joshi, Ph.D., Program Head



## *In Their Own Words*



### **SENATOR DARRELL STEINBERG PAYS VISIT TO LACDMH ROYBAL MENTAL HEALTH CENTER** **BY KAREN ZARSADIAZ, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER II**

On Wednesday, November 30th, California State Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg took a private tour of the Roybal Mental Health Center in East Los Angeles. He was joined by the Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH), Marvin Southard, D.S.W.

The pair visited the center to see the positive outcomes of a program focused on helping at-risk teenage mothers known as *Mamas con Bebés*. The highly successful program is funded by the voter-passed Proposition 63, also known as the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). Senator Steinberg spearheaded the passage of Proposition 63 in 2004 which imposed a 1% tax on personal income of more than \$1 million to support county mental health programs.

"It does my heart happy to see Prop. 63 in action," said Senator Steinberg as he visited with mothers in the *Mamas con Bebés* program in East Los Angeles.



# hope wellness recovery

*"It does my heart happy  
to see Prop. 63 in action"*

*-Senator Darrell Steinberg,  
architect of Prop 63.*



One young mom with two kids expressed her gratitude for the program and how it's affected her life in a positive way. "Thank you. You're the reason why we're here. You've helped moms become better parents and bond with their children. You helped me bond with my children," explained the 17-year-old. After overcoming her own struggles, she is now a junior in high school who hopes to go to college and then law school to become an attorney.

Both the Senator and Dr. Southard spent time talking with young moms and their children, listening to their success stories and future plans. "You look like you're all doing well and I'm proud that we could help you," added Dr. Southard.

*Mamas con Bebés* is an intensive early intervention program run by LACDMH. The program provides counseling, care management, employment, educational, housing and other services to teen moms who were either on probation or referred by the Department of Children and Family Services. Currently, 41 mothers and their babies are involved in the program.

"There is tremendous work in Los Angeles County and the state. This program is one of the best kept secrets and we want people to know about it," explained Senator Steinberg.

Senator Steinberg feels MHSA has boosted the success of *Mamas con Bebés* which has shown an impressive record:

- 95% of families have found stable housing
- 71% have shown improved mother-child attachment
- 61% of children have shown decrease in aggression
- 61% of mothers have found stable jobs or are in school
- 59% decrease in depression and anxiety for mothers served
- 39% of mothers in school, vocational education or college

The positive outcomes of the *Mamas con Bebés* program are currently being studied by Boston University as a "best practice".



## LACDMH ACQUIRES COST-SAVING, PAPERLESS TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF CARE FOR LA COUNTY RESIDENTS

*Supervisors approves \$93M contract to upgrade, integrate and streamline health care services.*

On October 18, 2011, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved an agreement with Netsmart Technologies, Inc., to provide a state-of-the-art electronic health record system, known as the Integrated Behavioral Health Information System (IBHIS). IBHIS supports the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) in its role as a provider of mental health services and as the local plan administrator for California's Medicaid mental health program.

"We are excited that the Board of Supervisors has approved this agreement," said LACDMH Director, Marvin Southard, D.S.W. "This will allow us to apply the most advanced technology to support the work and partnerships that create hope, wellness and recovery in the lives of clients and their families."

Health Care Reform requires providers to work more efficiently and coordinate care across the different domains of health care. Several years ago, LACDMH began the process of eliminating paper health records ahead of the federal deadlines set by the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act, enacted as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which penalizes organizations that are not using an electronic health record system by 2015 for Medicare providers.

With IBHIS, LACDMH will have the benefit of the clinical, financial and administrative functionality for about the same average annual cost as its current system that only processes health care claims. The \$93M agreement with Netsmart has a term of approximately 11 years.

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## FIRST-EVER STREET MEETS BEATS CONCERT IN SKID ROW HITS ALL THE RIGHT NOTES

Most everyone knows Los Angeles Philharmonic violinist Robert Gupta has worked closely with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH), bringing his monthly Street Symphony to Skid Row at the Downtown Mental Health Center (DMHC). This time, though, was a little different.

On Friday, November 18th, Gupta teamed up with Drumming for Your Life Institute founder Steven Angel for a unique and interactive show. They performed at DMHC to create music to soothe the soul.

"I feel music is therapy. I feel music is medicine," Gupta said. "The Street Symphony concert series has been wonderful. This concert with Steven Angel is really the next step. It's an interactive step that will show how music truly affects us."

About 20 clients took part in the successful first-time concert where clients not only listened to the talented musicians perform but also participated in the concert themselves by playing along. Angel passed out drums to participants and also gave an instructional demonstration on how to create beats on the drums. Everyone who took part in the drum-along enjoyed making music to their own beats.

"This is the beginning of a fruitful collaboration to enrich lives by bringing two worlds (the violin and drums) together," stated Angel. "I believe this will be powerful for everyone that will be felt today, tomorrow and the future."

Since this is the first collaborative effort between Gupta and Angel, they plan on holding more concerts in the future. Both musicians enjoy sharing their love of music with others, utilizing music as a way to heal. Besides Gupta and Angel, the concert also included guitarist Paul Viapiano and percussionist Jose Gurria Cardenas.

# hope wellness recovery

## LACDMH Mission

*Enriching lives through partnerships designed to strengthen the community's capacity to support recovery and resiliency.*

## Our Values

**Integrity:** We conduct ourselves professionally according to the highest ethical standards.

**Respect:** We recognize the uniqueness of every individual and treat all people in a way that affirms their personal worth and dignity.

**Accountability:** We take responsibility for our choices and their outcomes.

**Collaboration:** We work together toward common goals by partnering with the whole community, sharing knowledge, building strong consensus, and sharing decision-making.

**Dedication:** We will do whatever it takes to improve the lives of our clients and communities.

**Transparency:** We openly convey our ideas, decisions and outcomes to ensure trust in our organization.

**Quality and Excellence:** We identify the highest personal, organizational, professional and clinical standards and commit ourselves to achieving those standards by continually improving every aspect of our performance.



Los Angeles County  
Department of Mental Health  
is dedicated to partnering with  
clients, families and communities  
to create hope, wellness and  
recovery.



<http://dmh.lacounty.gov>



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# A Final Thought

**By Kathleen Piché, L.C.S.W., Public Information Office Director**

What will 2012 bring? More heroes, less villains please!

As Dr. Southard mentioned in his *Message from the Director* on page two, many LACDMH staff, no matter what item they function on, are heroes. Clinicians usually enter the field because they have a heartfelt purpose for helping others. They want to make a difference; helping clients to not just survive another day, but to succeed in living independently during their lifetime. We are pushing hope, wellness and recovery, for real!

In 2012, we will continue our heroic efforts to fend off the villains, no matter what form they may take. The nasties are out there, lurking around the corner, waiting to rear their ugly heads in the form of budget cuts, the crisis of the day, or in just being overwhelmed.

Challenges will continue but triumphs will remain within our grasp. This is important to remember, especially around the holidays and times of stress. Enjoy the joyful moments and relish the successes of 2011. Take time to acknowledge your wins, you deserve it. Take care of yourself. You can and will be able to handle the challenges put before you. When overwhelmed, sit down, relax and take a breath. Take a walk if you have to. Get to a place where your thoughts are clear and you will make better decisions. You always have options.

Reviewing and revising goals can be constructive at the start of a new year. Take stock and prioritize what is really important to you and your family. Be specific about what you'd like to accomplish and create a plan of action. Find an hour or two each day that you'd normally be watching television or surfing the net and use that time to take a step

toward one of those new goals. Take baby steps at first and soon you will be running!

For those with astrological tendencies, 2012 will be the year of the dragon. China's celestial dragon represents potent and benevolent power. Dragon years have the potential for great accomplishment or great disaster, depending on your perspective--another reason to stay positive! 2012 will be the year of the water dragon, noted for calm, visionary intelligence and the balance of right brain creativity with left brain logic. The water dragon is likely to bring the five Chinese blessings of harmony, virtue, riches, fulfillment and longevity, making the coming year one of breakthrough. So get ready to embrace your inner dragon!

In the Public Information Office, we are attempting our own breakthrough in producing a short news-magazine show entitled *Meeting of the Minds*, to be broadcast on the County Channel, the DMH website and on our YouTube page. This ten-minute television show will be produced on a monthly basis and will seek to inform the community and create discussion on mental health issues. Like the *Message from the Director* segment in this magazine, the video will feature a short, topical address from Dr. Marvin Southard, LACDMH Director. Another segment entitled *Mental Health Minute*, will inform about current mental health happenings and events and features LACDMH PIO Karen Zarsadiaz. *Walk the Talk* will be the third, short interview segment with Subject Matter Experts (SME's) and persons in recovery and will explore how others have traveled the road to hope, wellness and recovery. The new show will premiere in February, stay tuned for updates.

